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Fifty-fifth year

Provisional

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New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Wang Yingfan	(China)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mr. Cappagli
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Mohammad Kamal
	Mali	Mr. Ag Oumar
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Security Council Mission visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo,
4-8 May 2000 (S/2000/416).

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Security Council Mission visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 4-8 May 2000 (S/2000/416)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Japan, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Pakistan, Portugal, South Africa, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mwamba Kapanga (Democratic Republic of the Congo) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Baali (Algeria), Mr. Mmualefe (Botswana), Mr. Akasaka (Japan), Mr. Dorda (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan), Mr. Monteiro (Portugal), Mr. Kumalo (South Africa), Mr. Nhleko (Swaziland), Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania), Mr. Daka (Zambia) and Mr. Jokonya (Zimbabwe) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report on the Security Council mission visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, document S/2000/416.

I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Richard Holbrooke, head of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America):

Allow me to apologize for my tardiness; as I was arriving here, the Secretary-General contacted me regarding the fast-moving developments in Sierra Leone concerning Mr. Foday Sankoh, who as we all know is at the airport area in Freetown. He is wounded; I believe he is receiving medical treatment from British doctors. The circumstances are still very murky, and the Secretary-General has been seized of the issue. I profusely apologize for holding up the convening of this meeting, particularly since, as head of the Security Council delegation, I recognize my obligation to begin this discussion.

I congratulate you, Mr. President, on the extraordinary way in which you have handled a month in which nothing has gone according to plan. Every day there has been something new; it has been a difficult period during which to oversee the Security Council.

It is a great honour, Sir, to have been asked by you and by your predecessor, Ambassador Fowler, to chair the delegation that went to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and ultimately to the Horn of Africa. I want to stress that the seven nations took no national positions; there was a consensus throughout. I would like to speak in the same capacity today, following up on the report that Ambassador van Walsum, Ambassador Greenstock and my other colleagues gave last week while I was still overseas.

The fact that we spoke with one voice carried a very powerful message. Three representatives from Africa — Tunisia, Namibia and Mali; three representatives from the European Union — the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands; and an American: this was an extraordinarily well balanced trip. We made it clear, however, that we were also speaking for the eight countries not present. None of our interlocutors could see any differences between us because there were none. The disagreements that often occur in this Chamber simply were not present on this trip. It was a great privilege to be the chair of such a diverse group of talented diplomats. Every single one of the seven ambassadors spoke in every meeting, on every issue, interchangeably. This symbolized to our interlocutors the importance of African leadership in the Security Council and in the United Nations at large. To the other four members of the delegation it showed that Africans were willing and eager to share the burdens of peacemaking in Africa and beyond, and to

the rest of the world a delegation so carefully balanced sent a very powerful symbol.

I think that the three missions that the Security Council has authorized in the past eight months — to East Timor under Ambassador Andjaba, to Kosovo under Ambassador Chowdhury, and this one — are also an important emerging aspect of Security Council activities. This mission fell somewhere between a fact-finding mission, a report to the Security Council and, as it turned out almost inadvertently, a negotiating mission, at least twice: over the crisis in Kisangani and in our unexpected diversion to the Horn.

The trip was not about tourism. It is critical that we get the Security Council out of this magnificent Chamber, out of presidential palaces and luxury hotels, and into the real world. In Kinshasa, for example, we held simultaneous meetings with an ecumenical religious delegation, leaders of civil-society organizations and representatives of political parties. Three of our team, Ambassador Andjaba, Ambassador Greenstock and Ambassador van Walsum, made an extraordinary trip to Kananga, which I hope they will describe in more detail. Members may have seen reports of it on television; it was certainly the emotional high point of the trip, and the four of us who remained in Kinshasa deeply envied their opportunity, which was in essence a chance to see the people of the Congo in a massive human demonstration of a desire for peace.

In every meeting, we heard a loud and unmistakable endorsement of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. Based on these remarkable meetings, I think we can say the following about the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo: they want peace; they want the withdrawal of outside forces; they do not want to live under foreign occupation; they do not want to see their rights threatened or their resources plundered. They want the Congolese rebel movements to lay down their arms and commit to a political process aimed at forging a new dispensation. They want armed insurgents from neighbouring States, such as the ex-Rwandan Armed Forces, Interahamwe and UNITA, to leave their country forever. They want the present Government to engage in the national dialogue and abide by its results. They want to live in a vibrant State built on solid democratic institutions, and they want economic opportunities and the freedom to travel within their own country which is their right.

I want to underline that we went on this trip, however, not in an effort to undermine the existing Government. We reinforced and stressed to President Kabila at all times that we deal with him as the President of the country and that the national dialogue is part of the Lusaka peace process. I mention that because it is a matter of great concern to the Government what the national dialogue's real purpose is, and I need to underline that everything we did was designed to further that process. It is the only way forward and the only way to address the yearnings of the Congolese people. There is no military solution to the present conflict.

Our efforts must focus on two areas. We must use all our collective influence to keep all the signatories firmly within the Lusaka Agreement. It is the only way forward; if one party is allowed to violate it, others will also violate it. We must strengthen the regional and international consensus for peace based on Lusaka.

There is one area of our report that we need to underline: our unanimous view that Council decisions and actions in the Congo should not be affected by the dangerous and terrible events in Sierra Leone. This is difficult. We recognized, and it was clear on every day of the trip, that the shadow of Sierra Leone was hanging over United Nations peacekeeping, not only in Africa, but around the world. But there was no direct effect of the events in Sierra Leone in the Congo or on the Lusaka peace process. Sierra Leone is not a metaphor for Africa; it is not a metaphor for United Nations peacekeeping. The trip reinforced our belief, and my personal belief, that Africa is as diverse as any other collection of 53 independent nations in the world. The three conflicts that immediately preoccupy us — the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia-Eritrea and Sierra Leone — dominated our mission, of course, but it is immediately clear that they are as diverse in scope and kind as East Timor, southern Lebanon and Kosovo. It is a fallacy based on superficial and insufficient knowledge to say that the failure of the Lomé accords in Sierra Leone intrinsically implies an inevitable failure elsewhere, simply because the elsewhere is on the same continent.

That being said, we must get peacekeeping right. And that extends far beyond the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Sierra Leone illustrates the dangers of getting it wrong. Peacekeeping is this institution's core function,

the one that was foremost in the founders' minds 55 years ago. Whether the United Nations succeeds or fails in the twenty-first century, and whether this great institution, the Security Council, continues to be the world's pre-eminent forum for peace and security, depends in large part on the future of peacekeeping.

Yesterday in the Fifth Committee we had an important discussion on the current challenge to peacekeeping and how together we must work to fix peacekeeping in order to save it. This means addressing the shortcomings, and how we finance peacekeeping, as well as improving how the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) operates. It will not happen overnight. It will require all of us to make tough choices. But if we fail to act, if we allow the gap between capacity and demand to widen even further, then the United Nations and all the people depending on it around the world will suffer.

I am particularly grateful for the efforts and support expressed yesterday by many speakers in the Fifth Committee. What they discussed in that Committee yesterday has immense importance for our deliberations here, and I would particularly single out the countries that yesterday voluntarily said they were prepared to move from group C to group B in financing. Five have already come forward — Cyprus, Israel, Hungary, Estonia and the Philippines — and others have indicated their intention to do the same. This strengthens our efforts, because it begins to broaden the financial base by which peacekeeping will be funded.

Let us also praise the men and women of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and of the specialized agencies, who work under difficult conditions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbours, with special praise reserved for the Special Representative, Ambassador Morjane, and the Force Commander, General Diallo. They are doing outstanding jobs under difficult circumstances. We recall General Diallo's courageous defence of Monrovia in 1992, and we saw on this trip that he also possesses equal diplomatic skills.

MONUC's deployment in adequate conditions of security and cooperation should remain a key priority. We took a major step forward on the first day of the trip with the signing of the status-of-forces agreement in the presence of President Kabila, who decided to

change his schedule to attend the signing ceremony. This essential step is now behind us. We are inclined to believe that all the States signatories to Lusaka are in favour of MONUC deployment and will, if necessary, bring pressure to bear on any reluctant parties to follow suit.

Let me be frank on another problem that was all too obvious and cannot be disguised — the strains that continue to exist between the Joint Military Commission (JMC) and MONUC. We met with the JMC in Lusaka. The meeting raised questions as to how we can move forward, and we hope that those questions can be addressed. We remain convinced that the JMC should be physically co-located with MONUC and must be a permanently sitting body that can respond to breaking events on the ground as part of a joint effort. I want to stress to those of you who were not with us that there was a linguistic misunderstanding between us in this room and the people on the ground, which we only realized during the trip — and that is that the word "co-location" has a different meaning in Africa than it did here. When we talked about "co-location", we talked merely about MONUC and the JMC being in the same building. That was not the issue to our friends in Africa. The issue was what city the JMC would go to. This was quite different from what we expected. No one we talked to objected to sharing a building. But several of the Lusaka peace signatories stated that they will not send their representatives to the JMC to Kinshasa at this time, and they gave us little hope to believe that they wanted to send them ever. So this is an unresolved problem that I believe we were not adequately aware of until we got there, and it requires our attention. I want to clarify it, because the same word, "co-location", had two significantly different meanings.

As a result of the meetings in Lusaka with the JMC and the Political Committee, Ambassador Levitte, in his prospective capacity as President of the Security Council in the month of June, invited the Political Committee to come to New York on or about 16 June. I thank our good friend Jean-David Levitte for this important initiative. I believe this will be a critical meeting. I am sure Ambassador Levitte will have more to say on it, but I would draw everyone's attention to the fact that this will be another step forward in the emerging joint Organization of African Unity (OAU)-Security Council collaboration in furtherance of the Lusaka Agreement. It will be a very important meeting,

or to be more precise, series of meetings, and I hope we can all protect the dates of 15 and 16 June on the calendar, awaiting instructions from Ambassador Levitte in his capacity as June President.

We raised only two issues with the Political Committee — the national dialogue and the need to disarm non-signatory armed groups operating in the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The members of the Political Committee stated clearly that they wished to keep the national dialogue in the hands of the Congolese people, but they did engage us on the question of the armed groups. I think it is vitally important that this be one of the main topics for discussion in June; a successful disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement campaign is essential for the success of Lusaka.

Finally, let me address the unexpected outbreak of fighting between Ugandan and Rwandan forces in Kisangani on the second day of our trip. At first, we feared that the fighting in Kisangani would wreck our trip. In fact, in an unexpected way, it provided us with a challenge and an opportunity that, I am proud to say, the seven nations of this special mission addressed. In what amounted to de facto mini-shuttle diplomacy, the seven nations of the Security Council mission negotiated, between President Kagame and President Museveni, face to face and by telephone, a Security Council/Government of Rwanda/Government of Uganda statement issued on 8 May and reaffirmed two days ago in their summit in the United Republic of Tanzania. The fighting then stopped. If anyone wants additional proof of the precedent that Ambassador Andjaba set in East Timor of the capability of Security Council missions, I think this once again illustrates that, under certain circumstances, the Security Council can, as it did again here, and particularly in East Timor, make significant strides forward.

This opportunity will, however, require implementation; both President Kagame and President Museveni made it absolutely clear that they were prepared to demilitarize Kisangani, but they wanted to do full demilitarization only when MONUC forces got to Kisangani. I also talked with President Mugabe and President Kabila about this arrangement before it was announced. Both President Kabila and President Mugabe welcomed the announcement, and both of them said that they thought it was potentially a model for the successful implementation of all of the Lusaka Agreement. However, it needs to be stressed,

particularly to our colleagues in the DPKO office, that time is essential. It is vitally important that the forces from MONUC that will go to Kisangani get there ahead of the initial deployment schedule. Dates like July will not work for Kisangani. I understand that the Secretary-General has already been in touch with several countries about this. I think I can safely say, speaking for the members of the Security Council mission, that we believe that getting a United Nations unit, of whatever nationality, to Kisangani immediately, in the next few weeks, is deemed appropriate, is absolutely critical. Otherwise, the risk of war beginning again is very substantial.

I also wish to draw the Council's attention to the very positive announcements and statements coming from the Government of South Africa concerning their readiness to play a more active role in the process.

In conclusion, we remain convinced that the link between the exploitation of natural resources and the continuation of the conflict is a critical area for the Council's further investigation. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola and Sierra Leone are all adversely affected by the plundering of their natural resources, even though the actual circumstances vary from country to country. But these issues are central to peacekeeping, and they need to be looked at in the Democratic Republic of the Congo context.

As we said on our last day in Asmara, by the end of the trip, including the diversion we took to the Horn at your instructions, Mr. President, it was difficult to tell whether we had been on the road a week or a year. My colleagues and I felt sleep-deprived, either underfed and overfed, depending on where we were, and constantly on the move. But I assure you, Mr. President, that by arriving at this consensus we feel we served the purposes of the Security Council. On a personal basis, I would gladly travel with any and all of them again under the chairmanship of any of my six colleagues, and I hope that when they say similar things about me that they actually mean them.

I thank you, Mr. President, for the honour of asking me to lead this delegation. I apologize for being late, but I want to state that under the most unusual circumstances it was one of the most satisfying experiences of my professional life, and despite the enormous difficulties and our inability at the last minute to prevent what turned out to be an inevitable resumption of hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea,

I believe that we move forward the cause of peace in our primary mission, and if we can address the fresh opportunity that Kisangani has put before us, we can actually make genuine progress. But once again, as in all of these issues, implementation is what matters, not simply the paper agreements.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): On behalf of the Council, I would like to express gratitude and appreciation to all the members of the Security Council mission, ably led by Ambassador Holbrooke, for the manner in which they discharged their important responsibility on behalf of the Council.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): I am very grateful to Ambassador Holbrooke for his report, and as the first member of the mission to speak after him, I wish to thank him for his generous words about the mission and the members of the mission. I echo everything he said about the value, the pressures and the enjoyment of being on the mission, and I would like to pay tribute to him as leader. It may have seemed, from what one saw in the media and on the television, that this was a one-man mission. One would be wise to imagine what it would have been like if Ambassador Holbrooke had been a mere member of the mission, and not its leader. But I would like to say that he led the mission with a sense of inclusiveness and equality among members of the mission that was both an example and an inspiration to us, and I would like to thank him for that.

It is also important that we recognize how much we owed on that mission to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), Ambassador Morjane, General Diallo, the people on the ground who looked after us and to the Secretariat staff who came with us and looked after and supported us in extremely difficult circumstances. Nor could we have done without a remarkable service from the Egyptian company MC, which gave us an aircraft and a crew with remarkable support for the journey that we had to accomplish. The third tribute has to go to the Governments that we met. From President Kabila onwards, there was a responsiveness, an interest and a willingness to do business on the detail that was extremely important to the mission.

I believe that overall the mission accomplished a timely and much-needed boost to the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and beyond

that it demonstrated a commitment that we had only evinced from this Chamber previously of the Security Council to problem-solving in Africa on the ground, which was and is extremely important in raising the morale of Africans and people dealing with Africa that the Security Council is not going to let go of the need to address the problems we are facing at the moment. The fact that we did this when we were there, I think, was a very important symbol of that.

Yes, as Ambassador Holbrooke has indicated, it was also important for three of us to get out to a provincial town in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Kananga is a city of 700,000 people with no electricity supply at present, with no regular water supply, but with a spirit for peace and an organization in difficult circumstances under a remarkable provincial governor that I think was an inspiration to those of who travelled to that city. The look on the faces of the people in the streets of Kananga calling out for peace as we went past is an abiding memory of that mission.

It reminds me of a similar visit I paid a few weeks earlier to a town in Sierra Leone, only 30 kilometres outside Freetown, where the people had just come back to a city without electricity or water and were calling upon the British team that was there for peace in exactly the same way. That city has now been overrun again by the Revolutionary United Front. It is empty. The people have fled out into the bush. I think we have got to make sure that that does not happen to Kananga or to the other cities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. If, as Ambassador Holbrooke has said and as our report says, Sierra Leone is not to cast a shadow over what we are trying to do in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it also reminds the leaders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the leaders involved in the Lusaka process of what can happen again to the Democratic Republic of the Congo if the ceasefire breaks down and we come back again to trying to solve these long-standing differences by military means rather than by addressing the political root.

That means we must now follow up quickly on the report's recommendations, because the Lusaka parties are looking for results, the ceasefire is holding but it is fragile and, in particular, Kisangani is still tense. I think we achieved something there, but MONUC has got to follow up quickly, and the capacity of the observers there to act on what we achieved on

Kisangani is absolutely vital. The wider assurances that we received while we were there, on security and access for the United Nations to Kisangani, must be followed up. Part of this is the agreement between the leaders of Uganda and Rwanda to deconflict in Kisangani. They met again in Tanzania on 14 May. We have had reports about that meeting to the effect that they wish to reaffirm their commitment not just to the Lusaka Agreement, but to the withdrawal of all their troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in due course and to this agreement in particular, the Rwakitura agreement signed at President Museveni's farm, to reduce their forces at Kisangani to no more than two companies each. That is a very important piece of follow-up.

On the issue of co-location, we have said in our report that Kisangani is at least a prime candidate for co-location, both of MONUC and the Joint Military Commission (JMC) together, and for the national dialogue. It would be helpful if the Council could have an assessment from the Secretariat, and from MONUC through the Secretariat, on the practicality of using Kisangani in this way. We would like to know something about the logistical and resource requirements of taking this route and whether they think it is going to be generally acceptable to the parties. I hope, Sir, that under your presidency we can come back to this point quite quickly; otherwise, there will be no sense of follow-up to what we achieved in Kisangani, which will be only short-term and will evaporate unless there is this follow-up.

This is true also, but perhaps in a longer time-frame, for disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement. We raised this with the Political Committee, and we will need to raise it again when the Political Committee comes to New York in June. We need to prepare a way forward on disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement, which gives a role not just to the United Nations presence on the ground, but also to the Joint Military Commission, where I think there could be a specific function for the JMC as regards the precise definition of the groups we are talking about and a monitoring of early action on disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement. That is something we would like to see taken forward under Ambassador Levitte's presidency next month.

On the national dialogue, we have to recognize that the parties will not leave aside the military option

unless the political option is alive and running. We recognized on the mission that all the Governments, especially Kinshasa, want to see the proper arrangements made for this and want everybody to get a move on, but we think that facilitator Masire's timetable for a beginning of the national dialogue in early July is, in the circumstances, the only realistic one and the international community should support it. He needs funds — not just pledges, but disbursements — and all of us need to work to ensure that that happens.

We also need to drive home the message in this debate and beyond that the national dialogue is for the Congolese people to decide on. The substance of it is for the Congolese people; the outside facilitation is to provide the mechanism for that. The outside mechanism will not affect or decide the substance. If we can give that clear message, then I think all parties will be prepared to proceed with this in a way which removes their apprehensions.

I echo Ambassador Holbrooke's remarks on the need to move also on an expert panel on illegal exploitation of resources. When we next meet on this, we need to take action on that. That panel needs a mandate and it needs a decision by the Council. The United Kingdom would like to see early movement on it.

Finally, let us come back to the point that the Democratic Republic of the Congo needs to be judged on its merits. We are focusing on Sierra Leone this week, perhaps next week, but we have to come back to the next steps on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In asking the Secretariat for further work on this, could it please also let us know frankly if its preoccupation with Sierra Leone is having an effect on its ability to deal with the Democratic Republic of the Congo. If that is the case, it must have immediate reinforcement, because the needs of the Congo cannot wait for other problems elsewhere to be solved before we take up the issues that we uncovered and took forward on our mission. The follow-up is as necessary on the Democratic Republic of the Congo as it is on Sierra Leone.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): The Ambassador of the United Kingdom has voiced my feelings very accurately. Our mission worked as a team without any differences of view among our seven members. That, to a large extent, is the result of the

personal efforts made by Ambassador Holbrooke, whom I wish to thank here.

The Security Council mission to Central Africa, of which I was honoured to be a part, was certainly busy and useful. It was busy because of our many different contacts with almost all the actors in the conflict. It was useful because it enabled us better to understand the suffering and hopes of the Congolese people and to assess the state of mind of the belligerents, to evaluate the expectations held of the United Nations and to contribute to the settlement of one problem — in Kisangani — that erupted while the mission was in the region.

The mission enabled us to make several findings. On that basis, we can see where we should focus our efforts over the coming weeks and months.

As to our findings, the mission's report faithfully describes the elements thereof. I should like to stress those that I feel to be the most noteworthy.

First, the Congolese people is suffering and profoundly weary of war and of its chaos, violence and devastation, the massive violation of human rights, the massacres in war and occupation zones, the plundering of natural resources, the total absence of law, order and the minimum basic services that citizens are entitled to expect of their authorities. Ambassador Greenstock spoke very eloquently of the situation in Kananga, which is just one example among many.

Secondly, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is now ready to cooperate fully with the United Nations and to facilitate the work of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). Clear commitments have been made in this respect. Evidence of that is the signing of the status-of-forces agreement in the presence of our mission.

Thirdly, third States involved in the conflict claim themselves ready to respect the ceasefire and the 8 April disengagement plan and to implement the Lusaka Agreement. Indeed, the ceasefire has been respected since 14 April. The only major incident has been the fighting that erupted in Kisangani on 5 May between Ugandan and Rwandan forces. The presence of the mission in the region allowed us to persuade those two countries to agree to disengage their forces and to demilitarize the city.

Fourthly, the people and all parties to the conflict are calling on the United Nations to shoulder its responsibilities without delay — in other words, rapidly to deploy MONUC.

On the basis of these findings, where should we focus our efforts? France has identified five main areas.

The first is the implementation of the military aspect of the Lusaka Agreement. This is the top priority. We must build on the basis of the ceasefire established on 14 April. This requires, first, that the parties, through the Joint Military Commission (JMC), implement the plans for disengagement, redeployment and, ultimately, withdrawal; and secondly, that phase II of MONUC be deployed as quickly as possible so as to be able to monitor respect for the ceasefire and the parties' implementation of the commitments they have made.

Specifically, this involves several tasks. First, MONUC and the JMC must be co-located pursuant to resolution 1291 (2000). Secondly, we must speed up preparations for deploying MONUC up to the level authorized by the Council. The United Nations can do nothing without commitment by Member States to provide the human, material and financial resources needed. For its part, France will contribute to the equipment and logistical support for one of the four battalions deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Thirdly, a special effort must be made in Kisangani, which, in accordance with the agreement between Uganda and Rwanda, is to be demilitarized and controlled by MONUC. This will require MONUC to be given the means necessary for the job. In our opinion, deployment must be progressive and proceed as resources become available so that we can consolidate the nascent peace dynamic where it is most urgent and delicate, especially in Kisangani.

Here, I would agree entirely with the statement made by the Ambassador of the United Kingdom. I believe it would be useful and urgent for the Secretariat to help us to define the resources — no doubt even greater than anticipated — in that large city of 2 million inhabitants, the third largest in the country. In this way, the United Nations, through MONUC, can assume this major responsibility identified by our mission, in addition to those originally defined in resolution 1291 (2000).

In order to carry out all of these operations, the United Nations is represented on the ground by two eminent individuals, Mr. Morjane, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and General Diallo, MONUC Commander. All of the parties now have confidence in them, and this attests to their outstanding personal and professional qualities, for which I commend them.

The second area where we must focus our efforts is the national dialogue. This is not only one of the fundamental elements of the Lusaka Agreement, it is also the way in which the Democratic Republic of the Congo can be given a democratic base, allowing the re-establishment of unity in the country, the achievement of national reconciliation and the rebuilding of the State. France supports the work of the facilitator, Mr. Masire, by providing him with political support and \$700,000 in financial support. As is recommended in the report, we are in favour of swiftly appointing a high-level adviser to the facilitator, who would be based in Kinshasa and should be French speaking.

As for the venue, the report suggests that, first of all, one might consider Kisangani, which is centrally located in the country and which should be demilitarized and under United Nations control, pending a subsequent shift of the venue to Kinshasa for the national dialogue, in due course. We think this is a good proposal, and we believe it should be supported.

As regards the substance, the facilitator must make sure that the dialogue brings together all of the political forces, without giving preferential treatment to those that have taken up arms, and that it develops quickly, avoiding endless sterile dialogue. However, even though it is desirable that the internal political dialogue and the military provisions of the Lusaka Agreement proceed in parallel, it would be counterproductive to link the two processes too closely, because in the military situation — and we saw this just recently in Kisangani — there are developments that might be destabilizing and that have hardly any connection to the internal political issues in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The third area where we should focus our efforts is the establishment of a panel on the illegal exploitation of natural resources. Even before the mission left, the Council had taken a position of principle in favour of such a panel. The mission could not but note the importance of this problem and that it

would be a good idea to clarify the situation. Therefore, without delay, we have to spell out the mandate of the panel and call on the Secretary-General to set it up. Tackling what feeds the war — and is sometimes the motivation for the war — is a prerequisite to the search for peace. The French delegation attaches special importance to this matter.

The fourth area where we should focus our efforts is mass violations of human rights and massacres. Information on this subject is piling up week after week. Just yesterday, Human Rights Watch issued a new report that we cannot fail to be affected by. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as elsewhere, impunity must not be tolerated. The Council must very quickly start thinking about ways and means of fact-finding and making sure that criminals are brought to justice.

The fifth and last area is disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups. This is certainly a very difficult matter, first of all because the facts are very difficult to establish. Of course, it is convenient to use just one single accusatory label for all the so-called non-signatory forces, but the situation is certainly more complex than this. But above and beyond the difficulty of establishing the facts, it is clear that there can be no viable lasting military solution. For years, many trained armies have been trying in vain to find a military solution.

Thus, the only reasonable approach involves two elements. First, all refugees, exiles and wanderers who at one time or another have seen recourse to arms as the only solution must be offered three kinds of prospects in their countries of origin: their physical security must be guaranteed, they must be given an economic option, and they must be reintegrated into political life in their country.

Secondly, those who are truly guilty of crimes of genocide must be brought to justice, as well as all of those who in the last four years in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been guilty of crimes of war or crimes against humanity.

In conclusion, we are at a crucial moment in the evolution of this conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Some progress has been made, and we must consolidate that progress.

At the political level, first of all, we must maintain and support the dialogue that the Security

Council has now begun with the parties, first in January, on the initiative of Ambassador Holbrooke, and then this month with the Council mission. As the mission report notes, and as Ambassador Holbrooke pointed out, the French presidency of the Council in June will be organizing another meeting here in New York on 15 and 16 June, between the Council and the members of the Political Committee of the Lusaka Agreement. I will come back to the Council to provide further information on this once we get the details about the visit to New York by the members of the Political Committee.

The second area where we have to consolidate the progress of the peace process is at the military level. We must quickly give MONUC all the resources it needs so that it can be deployed on the ground. The credibility of the Council and of the United Nations as a whole is at stake.

On this point, I would like to stress once again what was said by the two preceding speakers, Ambassador Holbrooke and Ambassador Greenstock. Recent events in Sierra Leone certainly cast a shadow on all of the peacekeeping missions of the United Nations, particularly in Africa. But every crisis has its own particular features. We must of course draw all possible lessons from the Sierra Leone situation, but the lesson we draw for the Democratic Republic of the Congo is that the Sierra Leone situation must lead us to redouble our efforts here and to make our commitment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo a success achieved by the United Nations — in other words, a success achieved by all of us.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*):

First of all I would like to thank the head of our mission, Ambassador Holbrooke, for his briefing on the Security Council mission's visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and I would like to take this opportunity to express to him our appreciation for the leadership, wisdom and dynamism he demonstrated in the course of the visit. He thus enabled the mission to carry out the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council.

The Council's decision to send a mission to the region reflects the importance that it attaches to settling the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It also demonstrates the Council's desire to actively oversee the implementation of its resolutions.

Like all the other members of the Council who took part in the mission, my delegation endorses the observations and recommendations contained in the report of the mission. We believe that they deserve the full attention of the Security Council, the membership of the United Nations and the Secretariat. I would like to focus on a few points.

The visit made it possible to engage in direct dialogue with the parties on the implementation of resolution 1291 (2000) and the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. We urged the parties to choose peace and stressed their obligations in this regard, but we also took into consideration their expectations and concerns.

We heard positive and encouraging words from the leaders whom we met. President Kabila shared with us his Government's devotion to peace and his desire to give full support and cooperation to efforts under way to restore peace.

The ceasefire established in the agreement reached by the parties on 8 April in Kampala is a step forward on the path to peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but as yet it is fragile. The military developments that occurred in Kisangani and around the town during the mission's visit show the precariousness of the situation. As Ambassador Holbrooke said, the Council's mission made an active contribution to defusing the situation in Kisangani. We believe that during this decisive stage additional efforts at the political and military levels on the part of the parties, as well as constant and active support and follow-up on the part of the international community, are necessary.

We welcome the fact that all of the parties have emphasized the urgent need for the rapid deployment of phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) so as to avoid any vacuum that might imperil the ceasefire. Clearly such a deployment requires firm commitment on the part of all the parties. As a beginning, the signing of the status-of-forces agreement between MONUC and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in the presence of the Security Council mission, was significant.

Both President Kabila and the other Congolese parties and members of Congolese civil society that we met in Kinshasa reiterated their support for the inter-Congolese dialogue. We hope that the persisting

differences — in particular with regard to the venue of the dialogue — will be eliminated as soon as possible so that dialogue can commence on a solid basis. We call upon the Congolese parties to fully cooperate with the facilitator. We have already noted that the broad majority of interlocutors prefer that the dialogue take place on Congolese territory.

I would like to emphasize, as the report does, that, as regards the promotion of lasting peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, there is a close connection between progress in the inter-Congolese dialogue, deployment of MONUC and the implementation of other military aspects of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement.

Another issue our mission took up was the exchange of prisoners of war. Beyond the humanitarian dimension, this exchange would contribute to promoting trust among the parties. We welcome the positive reaction of all the parties to this issue. We believe follow-up should be carried out with the assistance of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) so that this expressed determination will be converted into actions as soon as possible.

Among the other questions that the mission raised with the parties was the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The mission recommends that the Council rapidly set up the group of experts whose establishment it has been considering. We expect the Council to reach a decision on this subject very soon.

The visit of the Security Council mission made it possible to begin a constructive dialogue with the parties that is worth sustaining. The proposal to convene the Political Committee in New York, under the Council presidency of Ambassador Jean-David Levitte, in June, would provide a new opportunity to continue this dialogue with a view to yet further supporting the peace process.

In conclusion, I, too, would like to pay tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to the Force Commander, Major General Diallo, and to all the MONUC staff for their tireless efforts to ensure the success of MONUC.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): Like my colleagues who have already spoken, I would like to pay tribute to Ambassador Holbrooke for his leadership and

determination as the head of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This mission coincided with very dangerous developments on the African continent.

As we all know, the Security Council started its work in the year 2000 with an affirmation of its commitment to conflict resolution in Africa. Today the Council is going through another "month of Africa", which has put this commitment to a difficult and demanding test.

It is from this perspective that we would like to express our appreciation to the members of the mission for their important contribution to redeeming the Council's pledge to meet this test. Ukraine has endorsed all the observations and recommendations contained in the report prepared by the mission. I would like to make a few comments with regard to some of the major issues raised in the report.

My first point relates to the issue of the deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). The results of the talks of the Security Council mission's members with the leaders of the parties to the Lusaka Agreement have reconfirmed the urgency of the deployment of phase II of MONUC. In this connection, we agree entirely that one of the most compelling tasks today is to prevent the developments in Sierra Leone from having any negative impact on the United Nations presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Certainly, it is not enough simply to say that the peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be judged on its own merits. We have to admit that potential MONUC troop contributors will take into account the current crisis in Sierra Leone. We have to acknowledge that their judgement will also be based on the United Nations response to the developments in Sierra Leone and on the successful outcome of the United Nations actions to overcome the crisis.

We agree with the mission's recommendation that the Secretary-General's final decision on MONUC deployment should be preceded by a reaffirmation by all parties of their commitment to the Lusaka Agreement. At the same time, we would also urge the Secretary-General to pay particular attention to increasing MONUC's capabilities to protect its personnel. The military strength of the expanded MONUC has to be strong enough to produce a real

restraining effect on any attempts to threaten the safety and security of peacekeepers.

The mission's report also underscores another point, which has to be addressed directly to the parties to the Lusaka Agreement. To be successful, the peace process has to move forward. The new attitude of the parties towards maintaining the ceasefire, noted in the mission report, is indeed encouraging. At the same time, the ceasefire is only one component of the Lusaka Agreement. In this context, the parties have to demonstrate more responsibility in advancing all other integral parts of the peace process.

For example, we recognize that the differences over the venue of the inter-Congolese dialogue are considerable. However, they do not amount to the major obstacle to the launching of the inter-Congolese political talks, which are so fundamental to achieving lasting peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In this connection, we fully support the initiative of France to convene a meeting of the Political Committee next month in New York; this might resolve some of the outstanding questions impeding progress in the peace process. We agree that more difficult issues, such as the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement of the armed groups, should also be taken up during that meeting of the Political Committee in New York.

It is also important to acknowledge the instrumental role played by the Security Council mission in defusing the Kisangani crisis, which recalled the times of the struggle for territories in Africa and was even labeled the Fashoda of the twenty-first century. The fighting in this Congolese city should encourage the Security Council to take a stronger position on the need to put an end to the presence of foreign troops in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is inconsistent with the principles of the United Nations Charter. We take note of the agreement between Rwanda and Uganda to withdraw their forces from Kisangani.

Before concluding, I would like to place special emphasis on the mission's recommendation for the early establishment of an expert panel to investigate the reports of the illegal exploitation of the resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It should be recalled that the Security Council has already formally undertaken to take a decision on this matter

expeditiously, taking into account the conclusions of its mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Finally, we, like the French delegation, are very much concerned about the human rights situation in the eastern Congo, which is proving to be really disastrous, according to a number of reliable reports. The Security Council should pay special attention to this issue. In our view, a panel should be set up for the purpose of investigating the reports on flagrant human rights violations and atrocities perpetrated against the civilian population in the eastern Congo.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Rwanda, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mutaboba (Rwanda) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

Mr. Mohammad Kamal (Malaysia): My delegation would like to join in thanking Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, not only for presenting the report of the Security Council mission's visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but also for his outstanding leadership of this important mission. We commend him and the other mission members for helping to improve the Council's understanding of the challenges that the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) faces there.

The civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a key link in the chain of interconnected conflicts that are ravaging a vast swathe of Africa. No fewer than six countries and three rebel factions have been drawn into the struggle in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which also includes militias and profiteers more motivated by the desire to exploit that country's natural resources than anything else. Thousands of civilians have been killed, and many more are dying from disease and hunger. Nearly a million Congolese have been displaced from their

homes. The recent fighting in Kisangani, which violated the Lusaka Agreement, the disengagement agreement signed at Kampala on 8 April and the 14 April ceasefire, is indeed a setback to the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We agree with Ambassador Holbrooke that the setbacks that have occurred should not deter us. The international community cannot abandon the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Doing so will only send the wrong message to Africa.

There is, of course, reason to be wary of another potentially dangerous United Nations peacekeeping operation in one of the most intractable war zones, but this operation reflects the growing consensus by the combatants themselves that it is in their own interests to abide by a peace Agreement that was signed last July. If an environment safe enough for peacekeepers can be established, the deployment of United Nations peacekeepers deserves support. We noted that each of the five central and southern African Presidents consulted during the mission's trip was unequivocal in his appeal for rapid deployment and apprehensive about the sustainability of the ceasefire without it. There is no doubt that the leaders of the region have to share responsibility for returning the Democratic Republic of the Congo to stability. Consequently, my delegation fully shares the recommendation that the Secretary-General, before making his final decision, should speak to each of the Lusaka parties at the highest level, seeking their unequivocal commitment to assist the deployment of phase II of MONUC and securing their continued commitment to the maintenance of the ceasefire and their firm undertaking to support phase II on the ground in every way possible.

The Lusaka Agreement is intended to lead to an immediate ceasefire and an inter-Congolese dialogue on the country's future. All sides continue to violate the Agreement, but large parts of the country are substantially at peace. MONUC would not interpose itself between active combatants; rather, it would provide security in relatively stable zones, which would allow observers to document violations of the Lusaka Agreement there. The aim is to reduce security fears on all sides and build confidence that would enable the parties themselves to expand peaceful areas and address the more intractable issues.

Chief among these issues is the problem of how to neutralize the ex-Rwandan Armed Forces and the Interhamwe militia, an essential element in restoring confidence in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. My delegation concurs with the mission's suggestion that unless this is resolved, it will be very difficult to restore the rule of law or to ensure the security of borders in the eastern part of that country. We agree that any successful disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme requires an end to support for all non-State militias, the peaceful reintegration of such fighters from neighbouring States into their countries of origin and the commitment by the international community to assist in this process.

We express our support to France for its intention to invite the Political Committee to meet in New York during the French presidency in June.

The experiences of Somalia and Rwanda have shown the disastrous potential of poorly conceived, ill-defined operations that lack the military and financial means to do the job.

As in Sierra Leone or elsewhere in Africa, the international community is at a crossroads in terms of how to respond in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Peacekeepers everywhere know that even the best-prepared ceasefire sometimes breaks down. Moreover, the crisis in Sierra Leone should not be allowed to cloud the international community's responsibility for helping to bring peace to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. At the same time, we would like to emphasize the need to avoid repeating similar mistakes in other missions, including the one in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has its own unique characteristics, and the peacekeeping operation there must be judged on its own merits.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): We would like to join our colleagues in paying high tribute to Ambassador Holbrooke for his leadership of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He brought the Council's authority to bear with his well-known diplomatic skills, tenacity, determination and power of persuasion upon the leaders of the nations involved. We are deeply grateful to him for the service he rendered to the Security Council and for the contribution he has made to the cause of peace.

We appreciate Ambassador Holbrooke's introduction of the report this morning, giving us the mission's insights into the real issues and challenges born of first-hand experience and an assessment of the situation. We are grateful to you, Mr. President, for arranging this open debate for considering the report of the mission. We recall our regret that the report of the Council mission to Kosovo could not be held in a format allowing participation of even the most deeply involved Members of the United Nations.

My delegation would also like to express sincerest thanks to the members of the mission for the role they played in their individual capacities and as members of the mission. Theirs was an enormously difficult mission, complicated by the rapidly deteriorating situation in Sierra Leone and preparations for war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The mission's intervention yielded immediate results, as evidenced by the conclusion of the status-of-forces agreement and by the joint declaration on the demilitarization of Kisangani.

We shall limit our intervention to five issues. The most immediate question in our mind is the deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). As the mission reports, the same concern is shared by the leaders in the region. Drawing lessons from the Sierra Leone experience, the mission advises caution against deployment before a conflict has run its course. The mission also recommends that we should be assured of the security of peacekeepers and immediate availability of reinforcements. We are obviously confronted with two opposing considerations: on the one hand, the expediency of deployment of MONUC for maintaining the peace process, and on the other hand, the imperative of security for peacekeepers and avoiding humiliation.

In this connection, we should like to recall Bangladesh's offer to provide one infantry battalion to MONUC. We have not hesitated to maintain our offer for the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), even in the midst of recent developments. We remain firm in our commitment to MONUC.

We believe in the complementarity of our collective efforts. We contribute to the cause of peace with what is at our disposal. Nations willing to contribute their men but not having the capacity to

furnish matériel should have their contribution complemented by countries that can provide equipment and other logistic and technical support. This will make our collective security efforts collective in the real sense.

Related to the deployment of MONUC is the issue of its functioning with the Joint Military Commission (JMC). It is disappointing to note that some members of the JMC refuse even to meet in Kinshasa, while the Council, in its resolution 1291 (2000), provided for co-location of MONUC and JMC.

The second question I would address is disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement. We endorse the view that all armed groups, including the ex-Rwandan Armed Forces and Interahamwe, must commit themselves to the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement process. This issue remains at the heart of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and has implications for peace and stability in the Great Lakes region.

The third issue we would comment on is the inter-Congolese dialogue. We share the view that the dialogue should be in conjunction with the deployment of MONUC and the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement process. The lack of agreement on the issue is disconcerting. We are confident Sir Ketumile Masire will be able to work out a consensus among the parties at an early date.

Fourth is the question of respect for humanitarian law and human rights. We are grateful to Ambassador van Walsum for raising the issue during the mission's visit. The Mwenga incident is particularly abhorrent, and the response of Mr. Ilunga is outrageous. This shows the long-term consequences of impunity. We agree that the Mwenga incident, because of the particularly grotesque nature of the crime, should be investigated in the first place. We also agree that all cases of violation of humanitarian law and gross violation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be investigated and that those responsible must be prosecuted. The release of prisoners of war is a humanitarian priority. We call upon all concerned to proceed quickly to release prisoners of war under the aegis of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The fifth and final point we would like to address is the setting up of an expert panel on the illegal

exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. When the draft reply to the Secretary-General was discussed, views were expressed in favour of a decision after the return of the mission from the country. My delegation would support the establishment of the panel as outlined by the Secretary-General, now that the mission is back and has made recommendations in favour of an early establishment.

We hope the Council and the Secretariat will have the occasion to exchange views with the Political Committee on all these issues during its proposed visit to the United Nations in June.

Here we would like to support the recommendation made by the United Kingdom for immediate attention to Kisangani. We too would request the Secretariat to make an assessment on a priority basis for rapid deployment of required MONUC contingents in that area without any loss of time.

Finally, the chances for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the area will depend on the leaders of the region. We believe they have control over the armed groups. We also believe they can commit these groups to the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement process and ensure full cooperation with the United Nations, allowing early deployment of phase II of MONUC. They can give the required assurances in their discussion with the Secretary-General, as recommended by the mission.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation has carefully studied the report of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo that visited the region of this conflict from 4 to 8 May 2000. We join in the positive assessment of the work by members of the mission under the leadership of Ambassador Holbrooke in pursuance of the Security Council mandate.

The main outcome of the mission, in our view, is the confirmation by all parties to the conflict of their commitment to settling the conflict by peaceful means on the basis of the Lusaka Agreement. It is encouraging that the ceasefire agreement is being respected by all parties so far.

Against that background, we are particularly concerned over the clashes that occurred on 8 May in Kisangani between the Ugandan and the Rwandan forces. In our opinion, the argument that fighting using that kind of artillery, as a result of which about 100 Congolese civilians were wounded, is not strictly speaking a violation of the ceasefire in our opinion is faint consolation, for such incidents at any point could lead to the resumption of fighting on a broad scale throughout the country. We attach priority importance to swift implementation of the agreements between the Ugandan leadership and the Rwandan leadership on the demilitarization of Kisangani.

Respect for the ceasefire, the signing with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo of the status-of-forces agreement, and the desire — seen in contacts with the Security Council mission — of all those involved in the conflict for swift deployment of phase II of MONUC must be accomplished in practice.

We agree with the mission's view that developments in Sierra Leone should not be allowed to cloud the international community's responsibility to assist in the settlement of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. At the same time, we fully support the mission's recommendation that before the appropriate decision is taken the Secretary-General should speak once again to each of the Lusaka parties, at the highest level, with regard to assisting deployment of peacekeeping forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

At all stages of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Russia has believed that an integral part of efforts to find a settlement must be the settling of the problem of the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement of members of armed groups, including the ex-Rwandan Armed Forces and the Interahamwe militia. We have always said that this question must be resolved peacefully and voluntarily. Detailed discussion of this matter, together with members of the Political Committee in mid-June, as is being proposed by Ambassador Levitte, could help us to move ahead in finding a solution.

Another key condition for finding a settlement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is the holding — pursuant to the Lusaka Agreement — of the inter-Congolese national dialogue. We regard the start of this

broad dialogue about the future of the Democratic Republic of the Congo as one of the most important tasks. We understand the desire of most of the parties to hold the dialogue in Congolese territory, whether it be in the capital or elsewhere. We think this question can be resolved by the Congolese parties themselves, with the participation of the international facilitator of the inter-Congolese national dialogue, the former President of Botswana, Mr. Masire.

In conclusion, I would hope that our united efforts will succeed in achieving the restoration of peace to the long-suffering land of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and that the recommendations of the mission will help to that end.

Mr. Fowler (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Canada welcomes the report of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We thank the members of the delegation for their work on behalf of peace in that country and hope that their practical expression of the commitment of the Security Council to the region will encourage an equally genuine sense of engagement by the signatories to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreements.

We believe that the timing of this mission was critical. While the disengagement agreement signed on 8 April has largely held, the eruption of armed hostilities in Kisangani on 5 May, in which large numbers of civilians were killed, demonstrates that the vigilance of the Council remains necessary and that without it much can still be lost. In this case the delegation moved quickly and was a crucial factor in getting the parties to acknowledge the need for a mechanism to reduce their military exposure. On 8 May we witnessed the fruit of this labour in the commitment by Rwanda and Uganda to demilitarize Kisangani and its surroundings.

(*spoke in English*)

Much work remains to be done before confidence can truly be said to exist among the signatories to the Lusaka Agreement. We commend this mission for seizing the parties of the need to agree on a venue for the Joint Military Commission and for the inter-Congolese dialogue, the latter being of particular interest to Canada. As a financial supporter of the inter-Congolese dialogue process, we are impressed by the resolve of the Congolese people to establish a democratic political structure and to develop institutions conducive to good governance, just as we

are impressed by the demand of civil society for a viable political track to displace the dysfunctional military option. We thank the delegation for its efforts to move the parties towards consensus on these issues, and we encourage those who have pledged funds in support of the inter-Congolese dialogue process to make this funding available to the facilitator as soon as possible.

Canada also appreciates the mission's efforts to harmonize relations between the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as demonstrated by the signing of the status-of-forces agreement on 4 May. The removal of administrative obstacles — for example, surrounding the issue of MONUC flight clearances — will facilitate the process of insuring the ability of MONUC to work effectively. We note that the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has yet to offer firm and credible guarantees, however, on the freedom of movement of United Nations personnel within the country and on stable and non-extortionary exchange-rate mechanisms.

Canada remains gravely concerned by the humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which continues to deteriorate despite the parties' commitment to the disengagement agreement. While we are encouraged that the mission was able to secure consensus on the need to proceed with the release of prisoners of war, we are disappointed that the parties were not more forthcoming with respect to assurances of improved humanitarian access. We also note that the delegation found unacceptable many of the parties' justifications for the high incidence of human rights abuses, which have so far been committed with utter impunity. We urge Member States to ensure that the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights field office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo receives appropriate funding and resources, and to ensure that human rights violators are indeed held accountable.

This issue is of great concern to Canada, because we do not believe that the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as currently planned has the capacity to ensure or even verify compliance with relevant provisions of international human rights and humanitarian law. In fact, in light of developments in Sierra Leone, we are more concerned

than ever that MONUC does not have the capacity to achieve even the core elements of its mandate.

As we stated in February, the resolution authorizing phase II of MONUC falls perilously short of matching the Mission's mandate with the resources needed for its success. Canada has long argued that an adequate match between mandate and resources is not an option but an operational necessity. Surely it is time to learn and absorb this lesson. The recent events in Sierra Leone, the parallels of which cannot be wished away, have reinforced our conviction that short-changing United Nations peacekeeping missions in terms of quantity or operational capability or of quality is indeed penny-wise and pound-foolish. More than that, it is an abdication of the fundamental responsibilities that are incumbent upon every Member State of this Organization, responsibility to the soldiers who serve in our names and responsibility to nurture and uphold the reputation and effectiveness of this Organization — responsibilities for which the members of the Security Council are directly accountable. Recent developments in Sierra Leone have demonstrated dramatically the imperative of the United Nations deploying capable and well-trained troops that are fully equipped from the moment of their arrival in theatre.

While the responsibilities of the Council and of the Secretariat are evident and important, those of the parties to this conflict are paramount. We reiterate our call on the parties to fulfil, in letter and in spirit, their obligations under Lusaka and subsequent agreements. Without such a commitment to pursue peace, the necessary conditions for an effective United Nations peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will necessarily elude us.

There is a human security disaster unfolding in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that requires immediate action. As Council members, our responsibility is to make certain that MONUC has the necessary resources to be more than a passive witness, while also ensuring its own safety. We should review carefully and soon the current plans and parameters for MONUC in this light.

We thank the delegation we sent to the Democratic Republic of the Congo for drawing the international community's attention to the importance of considering the situation in that country on its own merits. It is precisely because of the unique complexity

and delicacy of the current situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that we wish to emphasize the relevance of what has occurred in Sierra Leone. We should approach the significant challenges awaiting the United Nations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with very clear eyes and well prepared for the worst.

It is a particular pleasure for me to be joined at this table this morning by a pre-eminent Canadian diplomat and statesman, The Honourable Mitchell Sharp, who has served his country in many capacities as public servant and Minister, including, as my first boss in the 1960s, as Secretary of State for External Affairs. I am glad he could be with us today.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): Let me take this opportunity to commend my dear friend and colleague Ambassador Holbrooke for the outstanding leadership he provided to the mission. His steadfastness, firmness and ability to persuade contributed immensely to the success of the mission. I also wish to thank Ambassador Holbrooke for introducing the report and for the comments he has made on the mission's activities while in the region. In addition to the points that he has made, I wish to emphasize some points that are of importance to my delegation.

It is true that all the mission's interlocutors urged the deployment of phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) as soon as possible. Naturally, Namibia shares the same view. The 14 April ceasefire agreement continues to hold and the status-of-forces agreement has been signed. These two very important factors alone have paved the way for deployment of the 5,500 military observers. Any further delay of the arrival of the military observers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo might be misinterpreted and taken advantage of by the enemies of peace in the Congo. This time, we cannot fail the people of the Congo. Resolution 1291 (2000) has put the responsibility for the deployment of military observers entirely on the Secretary-General. We therefore urge him to bring the initial deployment timetable forward and to deploy the observers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo without further delay.

Furthermore, we wish to express our appreciation to those Member States that have offered to contribute their troops to MONUC.

The inter-Congolese dialogue is no doubt one of the important pillars of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. Namibia supports the early holding of such a dialogue and we encourage the facilitator to continue to work with all Congolese to resolve the outstanding issues, thus paving the way for the early holding of the dialogue. In this regard, we urge all Congolese parties to work together and cooperate with the facilitator to find a mutually acceptable venue.

On 25 April, in this Chamber, the facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue presented his work plan for the dialogue and outlined the difficulties he was experiencing, including the lack of human and material resources. We therefore renew our call for contributions and technical assistance to bolster the efforts of the facilitator and to give the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo a chance to succeed.

Now that the ceasefire is holding, the time has come for the exchange of all prisoners of war, as provided for in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. We therefore insist that those parties holding prisoners of war cooperate with the International Committee of the Red Cross to secure the release of such prisoners.

We remain gravely concerned at the reports of human rights violations in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The recent May 2000 report of the Human Rights Watch, entitled "Eastern Congo Ravaged: Killing Civilians and Silencing Protest", documents in graphic, grim detail war crimes being committed against civilians in the east. The report only confirms media reports about the most horrendous atrocities. The systematic rape of women and girls in the east must stop. The 15 Congolese women who were buried alive in the east should not be forgotten. Their cries should echo the call for immediate deployment of the United Nations observers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to assist in the process for peace, stability and development in that country.

We call on the rebels and their supporters to cease terrorizing the civilian population of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This situation demands immediate action and it is imperative that those responsible be held accountable for their actions. While on this critical issue, let me pay tribute to the United Nations agencies for their crucial work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in addressing the

desperate humanitarian situation of the Congolese people. Furthermore, I also wish to thank the non-governmental organizations for their contribution in this regard.

There is no doubt that the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is helping to finance the ongoing war. This illegal exploitation is taking place in violation of the sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and resolution 1291 (2000) and should not be allowed to continue. The mission has recommended the early establishment of an expert panel to take this matter forward, in concurrence with an earlier proposal by the Secretary-General. We fully support this proposal and are ready to consider a formal decision on this burning matter.

The resumption of fighting between Ugandan and Rwandese troops in Kisangani on 5 May is most deplorable. It is acceptable neither that foreign forces wage war against each other on foreign territory, nor that they invade another country. The resumed fighting has resulted in the deaths and injury of innocent Congolese civilians. Worse still, those who inflicted the damage and caused death do not seem to be remorseful about it. We look forward to the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the forces of Uganda and Rwanda, as committed in the agreement between the two countries.

In conclusion, let me pay special tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Morjane, to the Force Commander of MONUC, General Diallo, and to the men and women of MONUC for their tireless efforts in carrying out their mandate under difficult conditions.

Mr. Ag Oumar (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I join preceding speakers in thanking not only you, Mr. President, for organizing this open meeting on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but also Ambassador Richard Holbrooke for introducing the report to us and for his leadership of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As is usual for him, he led it most ably and with great knowledge of the situation. My delegation thanks him for that. In January, he focused his presidency of the Security Council on Africa, and now, by the nature of things, China's presidency in this month of May again has a lot of work to do on Africa, even though all these meetings on Africa were not on

the schedule. I should like to say to Ambassador Holbrooke that Africa remembers the commitments he made in January and that he must not rest until all those commitments are implemented.

Having said this, however, my delegation is very pleased with the positive outcome of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Kisangani incident and the violations in the Equateur Province are indeed deplorable, but my delegation considers that this was not a rupture between the parties to the conflict, but they do need to be followed up urgently. The response to the main issues raised by the Security Council mission enables us to say today that we are in a new and positive situation, and it is urgently necessary now to implement phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

The deployment of phase II of MONUC is no longer just something we would like to happen, but rather an imperative for all of the signatories to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and, indeed, for all of Africa, despite the lessons that can be drawn from the tragedy in Sierra Leone, which my delegation deeply deplores. It is our view that the problem of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement of the armed groups is an essential element for re-establishing confidence in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for putting an end to the many violations of human rights. We fully support the recommendations to the Secretary-General on the deployment of phase II of MONUC.

In the recent past, Mali itself witnessed how beneficial a national dialogue can be, which is why we are glad that the signatories to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and representatives of civil society, political parties and the church are all aware of the urgent need for the inter-Congolese dialogue. It is our ardent hope that the parties will very soon reach agreement on the venue where the dialogue is to take place so that it can start as soon as possible; because without a political option, there is a real danger that the parties might focus exclusively on the military option. We commend the efforts made by Sir Ketumile Masire in his work as facilitator.

My delegation supports the appointment of a high-level, French-speaking adviser to the facilitator

who would be based in Kinshasa, as the report before us today recommends. My delegation welcomes the idea of a new meeting in June, under the French presidency, of members of the Political Committee of the Lusaka Agreement and the Security Council, with a view to continuing the dialogue among the parties and giving it a new impetus. This would help not only the Security Council, but also the parties.

Mr. Cappagli (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this open debate, which makes it possible for the entire membership of the United Nations to participate. Their opinions will assist us in our consideration of the topic before us. We join previous speakers in thanking the Permanent Representative of the United States and head of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, for his very enlightening words, which complement the written report that has been distributed to us. We also thank most sincerely Ambassadors Levitte, Ouane, Andjaba, van Walsum, Ben Mustapha and Greenstock for their great personal efforts.

These are difficult times for the United Nations in Africa. The conflicts in Sierra Leone, Eritrea/Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, just to mention the most urgent ones, are testing our capability to respond. Sending the mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and then to Ethiopia and Eritrea is in and of itself a very important sign. We cannot skimp on resources in this situation, which demands all our effort and imagination so that we can find appropriate solutions. The mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a demonstration of the kind of response that we must give. The detailed report submitted to us today reaffirms our conviction that we can and must redouble our efforts to deal with a delicate situation in an equally delicate regional context.

In the mandate we gave to the mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we were clear. There is no doubt whatsoever that the mission fully discharged that mandate. It had direct contact with the protagonists and emphasized to them the imperative that they strictly abide by the ceasefire, with a view to reaching speedy and full implementation of the Lusaka Agreement and resolution 1291 (2000). We agree with the observations and recommendations put forward and

would like to touch upon some points that we think are important.

First, the report makes it evident that there is a consensus among the parties on the need to implement phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), as provided in resolution 1291 (2000). There is no doubt that this is essential in order to make progress in the peace process and thus we are hopeful that the conditions established in the resolution will be created so that the Secretary-General can recommend the speedy deployment of personnel.

The joint declaration of Rwanda and Uganda on the demilitarization of Kisangani, which was reached through the mediation of the mission, is doubtless a demonstration of this consensus. We regret that after the declaration was made, military confrontations took place, and we hope that these were merely isolated events that will not be repeated.

Another essential aspect for making progress in the peace process is the inter-Congolese dialogue. In this connection we reiterate our support for the facilitator of that dialogue, the former President of Botswana, Sir Ketumile Masire. We hope he will be able to overcome the difficulties that exist with regard to the current plan of work.

We would like to reiterate our concern about the consequences of this conflict for the civilian population. We deeply regret that there were innocent civilian victims of the recent confrontations in Kisangani. We are also alarmed by what was said in paragraph 51 of the report regarding the incidents in Mwenga. These incidents must be investigated, and the perpetrators of these truly grotesque acts must be punished.

We would like to support the proposal of holding a meeting in New York this June of the Council and the Political Committee. We believe that this is a positive step that would surely help with the implementation of the peace process. Finally, we also support the recommendation of the mission for the Security Council to rapidly establish an expert group to consider the question of the illegal exploitation of natural resources.

We believe that the conclusions of this report are clear, and they give us the hope that progress can be made in the speedy implementation of the Lusaka

Agreement and of Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1291 (2000).

By way of conclusion, we would like to reiterate our commitment to the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to Africa. We must not let recent events in the region undermine our efforts.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): Today's open meeting on the report of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a clear expression of the Security Council's commitment to reinvigorating the process of peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Only last week, the Security Council had the opportunity to critically assess the progress of peacekeeping efforts in Kosovo, following the dispatch of a similar mission. It is obvious that these missions are effective in creating a better understanding of issues before the Council and in facilitating its decision-making.

It is against this background that my delegation commends the members of the mission for their instructive findings and Ambassador Holbrooke for his leadership of the mission. The Jamaican delegation welcomes the mission's analysis and recommendations, which will inform the Council's actions on the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The report is comprehensive, addressing, inter alia, the military and security situation, the inter-Congolese dialogue, cooperation between the Democratic Republic of the Congo Government and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), as well as human rights and humanitarian issues. I will therefore confine my comments to some of the issues raised in the report to which my delegation attaches importance.

First, the tone of the report is guardedly optimistic. Significant events include the signing of the status-of-forces agreement on 4 May, the proposed timetable for the withdrawal of Rwandan and Ugandan troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the ceasefire agreement of 8 April. We are mindful, however, that peace remains fragile.

Secondly, we are pleased that the mission was able to meet with a wide cross-section of Congolese society, including members of civil society, religious leaders and leaders of political parties. The points of view they expressed in the meetings with the members

of the mission served to underscore the clear desire of the Congolese people for peace.

In this regard, the holding of the inter-Congolese dialogue is of paramount importance. The report cites numerous instances of discussions on the issue among various parties, noting, however, the divergent views on the venue. We note that there appears a greater degree of understanding between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue, which we hope will augur well for the dialogue's success. Indeed, without a political track, all parties will inevitably focus on the military track. This would have tragic consequences for the long-suffering people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Security Council, for its part, must continue to send a strong message of support for the facilitator of the dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire. We concur with the proposal made in the report that the facilitator, with the assistance of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the active backing of the Security Council, could address the issue of the venue in the first stages of the dialogue.

Thirdly, the readiness of some armed groups to engage in dialogue with the mission must be seen as a sign of hope for the future. My delegation notes, however, that the leader of the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (MLC), Jean-Pierre Bemba, did not meet with the members of the mission, due reportedly to logistical difficulties. My delegation wishes to emphasize that compliance by all armed groups with the Lusaka Agreement is a *sine qua non* for its successful implementation. It is also encouraging that all the parties to the conflict demonstrated their desire to achieve sustainable peace, and they appealed for rapid deployment of phase II of MONUC.

My delegation, in supporting the rapid deployment of MONUC, wishes to emphasize that the Mission must be equipped to deal with any eventuality. There is also a need for all parties to provide credible security guarantees to enable MONUC to fulfil its mandate to monitor the ceasefire and to ensure that life-saving humanitarian assistance reaches the civilian population throughout the country.

At the same time, mechanisms must be put in place to address the issues relating to refugees and internally displaced persons. We wish to join the

Permanent Representative of Namibia in calling for swift investigation of reported violations of human rights. My delegation was particularly appalled by the response of Mr. Ilunga, cited in paragraph 51 of the report, regarding the incident in Mwenga in which 15 women were reportedly buried alive.

My delegation remains concerned that the issue of co-location of MONUC and the Joint Military Commission (JMC) continues to be a source of contention. We also note that the report supports the view that the core structure for ceasefire monitoring, as outlined in resolution 1291 (2000), has to involve MONUC and the JMC working jointly from a co-located headquarters. We believe that the coordination of the activities of MONUC and the JMC is a functional one, and that every effort should be made to resolve the problem of location. Given the crucial role assigned to the JMC in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, we firmly believe that it must be provided with the resources to support its operations.

The process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants must be speeded up. The report observes that there is a rough, provisional figure of some 15,000 members of armed groups which still exist, but that the members of these groups are very hard to identify. There is obviously considerable work to be done if the ceasefire is to hold. Also, the proliferation of arms and access to arms by the populations throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo will continue to undermine the peace process and inevitably perpetuate the cycle of conflict. We wish to support the initiative taken by France to invite the Political Committee to meet in New York in June, and we are sure that this will in no doubt serve as a stimulus to the peace process.

In our view, the Council also needs urgently to address the establishment of the panels on illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As we have said on other occasions, the illegal exploitation of minerals throughout Africa is a cause of severe conflict and, in fact, is providing the resources for continuing conflict.

Finally, my delegation joins in paying tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the Force Commander and the men and women of MONUC for their work under very difficult circumstances.

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): My delegation, too, is grateful to Ambassador Holbrooke for his presentation of the mission's report, and I personally share his enthusiasm about the effective functioning of the mission. It has pointed out by other speakers that his style of leadership was largely responsible for that.

I heard Ambassador Holbrooke describe the mission as "three members from Africa, three from the European Union and one from the United States". There are, of course, other ways of looking at this; last Friday, I described the mission as "three from Africa, three from the P-5 and one from the Netherlands".

It is easy to find arguments for not going into the Congo. At a time when United Nations peacekeepers are taken hostage by rebels at one end of Africa, and a Security Council mission fails to prevent the outbreak of a full-scale war at the other end, the idea of deploying another peace operation in the heart of that troubled continent can easily be depicted as a hare-brained plan. The arguments against such an operation are valid and should be taken seriously. It is, in fact, somewhat disconcerting that so few of them have been heard in this morning's debate.

But, in the end, my delegation believes that all these arguments are overruled by the more compelling argument that the United Nations cannot afford simply to leave the Democratic Republic of the Congo to its fate. That country is one of the largest and potentially one of the wealthiest countries in Africa and lies in the very centre of the continent. The presence within its borders of the armies, invited or uninvited, of five other African countries evidently affects its national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Obviously, in such a huge country the deployment of 500 observers protected by 5,000 troops would indeed be a hare-brained operation if we were dealing with a fierce and bitter war between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its Southern African Development Community (SADC) allies on the one hand, and Rwanda and Uganda on the other, and if the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo II (MONUC II) was devised as an inter-position force. But that is not the case. The most important conclusion drawn by our mission is that all the forces want to disengage, and each of the five Presidents consulted by us was unequivocal in his appeal for a rapid deployment of MONUC II.

The argument that the Democratic Republic of the Congo is too big and MONUC II too small has clearly become less persuasive since the coming into force on 14 April of the ceasefire cum disengagement plan, which generally seems to be holding. A strip of land even as narrow as 30 kilometres, running right through the country, would be manageable from a military observer mission's point of view. Such a demarcation zone, however, should also serve as a warning to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to the international community that disengagement cannot be the end of our involvement. With MONUC II we will not be able to put an end to all the bloodshed, but our focus should be on the preservation of the Congo's territorial integrity.

One of the first decisions of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was not to tamper with the existing borders. This decision bespoke great wisdom at the time, for what would have been more natural for the newly independent African States than to want to revise their borders, which had been arbitrarily drawn by their former colonial masters. This is not just a matter for Africa; the entire international community has a duty to honour this African wisdom.

This is why disengagement is not enough but must be followed by withdrawal. It was made very clear to our mission that a solution to the problem of the armed groups is a prerequisite condition for this withdrawal. Without such a solution, we cannot simply move the demarcation line to the eastern border and call it MONUC III, and with it, such an operation will not be necessary. This is why the Lusaka signatories must find a common solution to the problem of the armed groups.

If we focus too much on military solutions, however, we tend to overlook another condition for preserving the Congo's territorial integrity, and that is the successful implementation of the inter-Congolese dialogue. We fervently hope that no one in Kinshasa may be tempted to believe that the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement is an à la carte menu that can also be sampled without the dialogue. If we want to preserve the territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we need all the help from Kinshasa that we can get.

In this connection, my delegation would like to suggest that the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have a fresh look at the

nationality question. We understand that in 1981 the Zairean parliament repealed the 1972 nationality law, thus stripping the Banyarwanda and the Banyamulenge of their Zairean citizenship. To be sure, the Banyamulenge were of Rwandan descent, but their forebears had migrated to South Kivu between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. This is, of course, a matter of domestic jurisdiction, and we are not suggesting that the Security Council should get involved in it. But we do want to point out that stripping ethnic groups of their nationality on account of their kinship with an ethnic group in a neighbouring country cannot be reconciled with the African doctrine of inviolate borders. Inviolable borders imply inviolable citizenship for all ethnic groups living within these borders.

This is just one instance of the many measures that can be taken to improve Lusaka's chances. The mission's report states that the Secretary-General's decision on deployment will be complex. We believe it can be made less complex by all of us.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The list of speakers is still very long. In order for the meeting to proceed smoothly, with the consent of Council members, I intend to suspend the meeting at 1.15 p.m. and resume it at 3.00 p.m.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

At the outset, I would like to thank Ambassador Holbrooke for his briefing. My thanks also go to the Security Council's mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the comprehensive report it has submitted so promptly. My colleagues who spoke before me have all highly commended the work of the mission. I wholeheartedly endorse those comments.

I would like to emphasize the following. First, speeding up and completing the deployment of phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) should be the priority in the current efforts of the Security Council in dealing with the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The report reflects the strong desire of the people of that country for peace and their expectations of the United Nations. Despite the differences among the parties to the conflict on many issues, they all share the desire for the early deployment of the United Nations peacekeeping mission. The five heads of State of the region

expressed the same desire when they met the mission. It is our hope that phase II of MONUC will be deployed smoothly and promptly, with a view to maintaining and consolidating the ceasefire and creating conditions for the implementation of other provisions of the Lusaka Agreement. In its peacekeeping operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations should pay attention to the lessons of Sierra Leone and avoid the same mistake.

Secondly, during its visit the mission succeeded in bringing Uganda and Rwanda to an agreement on the withdrawal of their respective forces from Kisangani and the demilitarization of that city. We have noted the fact that the parties concerned are engaged in consultations on ways to implement the agreement. It is hoped that the agreement will be implemented effectively.

Thirdly, we have noted the fact that the Joint Military Commission (JMC) still faces enormous difficulties in the lack of financial resources and logistical support. The neutral facilitator for the national dialogue in the Democratic Republic of the Congo also faces a lack of financial resources. If this matter cannot be resolved in a timely manner, the smooth proceeding of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will be affected. We hope that countries with the capacity to do so will continue to provide support to the JMC and the facilitator.

Fourthly, the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo still faces such enormous tasks as the complete withdrawal of forces, national dialogue and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups. In addition to the promotion and support provided by the international community, the political will of the parties concerned is imperative. Therefore, we favour the comments contained in paragraph 72 of the report to the effect that the ultimate responsibility for achieving peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains with the leaders of this region. The leaders of the parties concerned must honour their respective commitments to the Peace Agreement. Therefore, we welcome the proposal by Ambassador Levitte and expect the Security Council to invite the Political Committee of the parties to the conflict to meet in New York under his presidency and to discuss the difficult issues concerning the resolution of the conflict, so as to promote the peace process.

I now resume my capacity as the President.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Algeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this meeting to assess the developments in the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo following the recent visit by the Security Council delegation to Africa. It is true that today's meeting is being held within a particularly serious context, at a time when the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone is being severely tested and when armed confrontation between Ethiopia and Eritrea has resumed, ending the *de facto* ceasefire which held for more than a year. Despite the appeals for a ceasefire by the Security Council and the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), fighting that has caused considerable loss of life continues to rage, and we can only express our dismay and sadness at this tragedy, which the OAU, with the support of the United Nations, the United States and the European Union, had for months sought to prevent by patiently laying the groundwork for dialogue between the opposing parties.

Four months since the special meeting, organized by the Security Council on 26 January, major progress has been made in the implementation of the process to bring about a settlement of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the parties and the international community alike. That special meeting, in which the American presidency of the Council invested so much, has actually started to have an impact and to be reflected in concrete actions on the ground. This progress should be preserved and strengthened so that the momentum of peace created in this matter can be maintained and preserved.

The recent useful and in many respects timely visit which members of the Council made to the region is precisely within this context. We would have wished that the ambassadors who visited Africa would be present today to hear our views on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I realize that they must be occupied with other important tasks, but I would have hoped that they would have been here to hear the views of the OAU. The Council's visit, nevertheless, has enabled the representatives of the Council — and we welcome this — to transmit a message of the commitment of the international

community to peace in the Congo and in the Great Lakes region in general, and also to take note once again of the formal commitment of the parties to the faithful and complete implementation of the Lusaka Agreement and to note firsthand the obstacles that emerge on the path to peace.

The report prepared following that visit clearly shows that the rapid and complete deployment of phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) remains more than ever the absolute priority. Its accomplishment as quickly as possible will actually make a decisive contribution to strengthening the current ceasefire, to developing confidence among parties and thus to the orderly implementation of all the other provisions of the Lusaka Agreement, which remains the only guarantee of a return to peace in the region.

In this connection, we welcome the entry into force of the ceasefire and disengagement agreement concluded at Kampala on 8 April 2000 by the Political Committee, and the signing of the status-of-forces agreement between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations. These two important achievements reflect the determination of the parties, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to move forward in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement and constitute fresh proof of their commitment to peace.

In its capacity as an African country and as Chairman-in-Office of the OUA, Algeria is following with special attention developments in the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to which, as members know, it actively contributes, whether through military observers or financing of the Joint Military Commission. It is in this context that the Chairman-in-Office of the OAU took the initiative of organizing a summit meeting on the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Algiers on 30 April, in which the Presidents of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria and South Africa, the representative of the President of Zambia, the Secretary-General of the OAU, the facilitator, Mr. Masire, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations participated.

The Algiers summit made it possible to carry out an exhaustive evaluation of the progress achieved in the implementation of the peace process in the

Democratic Republic of the Congo, to reiterate the validity of the Lusaka Agreement and to call upon all the parties to the conflict to respect its provisions until peace is restored in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region. The Algiers summit also issued an appeal to States members of the OAU to contribute to the peace efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and announced the offers of troops made by South Africa and Nigeria to the United Nations.

While stressing the need to accelerate preparations for creating the conditions necessary to holding the inter-Congolese dialogue under the facilitation of Sir Ketumile Masire, the summit appealed to the Council to hasten the deployment of MONUC, a prerequisite for consolidating the ceasefire and strengthening the peace efforts.

The implementation of resolution 1291 (2000), in which the Security Council authorized the deployment of phase II of MONUC, should indeed be accelerated if we wish to avoid new disappointments in the Congo. In this connection, we are aware of the efforts being made by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to complete the preparations for this deployment. We also know that the preparation of the groundwork for sending troops and equipment for phase II has made major progress. We wish to encourage this while adding our voice to those who recommend that the lessons learned from other peace missions be taken fully into account in the context of the Congo. In stressing the need for speed in the deployment of the protection and logistic units of MONUC, we wish to emphasize the importance of the equipment and weapons that this force must have if it is to fulfil its mandate in the best possible conditions.

The precarious state of the infrastructures and means of communication in the Democratic Republic of the Congo requires movement and transport capacities to be strengthened and adapted. An additional effort is essential in this respect to make these means available on time in order to ensure the deployment of forces within the agreed time-frame.

We pay tribute here to all countries that have contributed troops to MONUC. Their commitment is what has allowed the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to prepare for phase II. We wish to stress in particular the contribution made by Italy of air and river transport units, which will be decisive to the

success of the Mission. On this occasion, we invite other countries with the means and equipment sufficient and appropriate to MONUC's needs to follow Italy's example. Similarly, we hope that the appeals regularly issued by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for specialized units and equipment for air traffic control, fuel storage, first aid and fire-fighting will soon be heeded, especially by the developed countries.

We are particularly encouraged by the progress achieved in recent weeks in the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In this regard, the conclusion of an agreement between Rwanda and Uganda on the practical modalities for their 100-kilometre withdrawal from the Congolese town of Kisangani, as well as the provisions made in the course of the Security Council mission to the region last week, reflect the will of the parties to move irreversibly forward to strengthen the ceasefire and to create conditions conducive to deploying MONUC.

The visit of Sir Ketumile Masire to rebel-held areas — his first since his designation as facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue — also represents a positive development following the commitment undertaken by Mr. Kabila, during both the Algiers summit and the Security Council mission, to extend his Government's support to the facilitator. This is an important development that should help launch dialogue among the Congolese, the success of which will surely ensure the success of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a whole. We believe that the settlement of practical matters relating to this, such as the choice of venue, participants and timetable for the dialogue, should be made as soon as possible.

In this connection, the importance of this aspect of settling the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo requires the international community to give facilitator Masire its full political and financial support. The success of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo depends on it.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mwamba Kapanga (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): Allow me first of all to fulfil the pleasant duty of extending to you, Sir, on

behalf of my delegation and in my personal capacity, my warm and sincere congratulations on your accession to the presidency of the Security Council.

I also wish to thank your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Canada, and to convey our gratitude and congratulations to him on his success as President of the Council last month.

My delegation also wishes sincerely to congratulate Ambassador Holbrooke and the members of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the report contained in document S/2000/416. We are convinced that the report will make a great contribution to charting the road to peace and sustainable development for millions of Congolese men and women, who, like all the inhabitants of the other continents, seek only to live decently in peace.

The members of the Council mission were able to witness firsthand the deep desire for peace of the Congolese people. The experience of Kananga speaks eloquently to this desire. Throughout the national territory of our country — from Mbandaka to Kisangani, from Goma to Bukavu, from Kindu to Mbuji-Mayi and from Lubumbashi to Bandundu, not to mention Kinshasa — children, fathers and mothers are calling for an end to the unspeakable suffering that has become their daily plight since the fateful day of 2 August 1998, when the horde of occupying forces from Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda swept unopposed through the Democratic Republic of the Congo like the angel of death, sowing misery and annihilation in their wake.

My country has spent two years in a pitiless war, the senseless nature of which has frequently been denounced by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and its Secretary-General, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim. Through me, the Congolese people call on the international community to use all means available to put a final end to this war, of which it is ultimately the sole victim.

My Government hopes that the United Nations will absorb a full understanding of the resolve and of the great need for peace and domestic and external peace of the Congolese nation as a whole. My Government calls on the international community to become further involved in a sincere and positive effort to bring the aggressors to sincere negotiations for peace

and regional stability, in respect for the relevant provisions of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement.

My delegation would like very sincerely to thank President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, for the organization of the Algiers summit of 30 April 2000 and for his continuing and tireless efforts to facilitate the rapid implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. The Algiers summit, in fact, made it possible to reaffirm the commitments undertaken during the meeting of the Political Committee held in Kampala, Uganda, from 6 to 8 April 2000, regarding a plan for disengagement and redeployment of forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in accordance with the Lusaka Agreement, as well as the decision to order a full cessation of hostilities to go into effect on 14 April.

We must indeed recognize that until now the ceasefire has been respected for the most part. It is certainly regrettable that the armies of Uganda and Rwanda have once again engaged in fierce fighting in the city of Kisangani. The civilian population of Kisangani, which, for an entire year has been the sacrificial victim of these acts of war, is the least of the concerns of these two countries for which Congolese lives are only a tool to achieve their mercantile goals. It is certainly equally deplorable that Uganda and the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo are stepping up their skirmishes in the Equateur Province. The most recent instance was the fighting that took place for control of the city of Bomongo on the border with the neighbouring Republic of the Congo.

But it is also certain that all of these activities are not of a scope that can endanger the peace process initiated in Lusaka. The war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a transnational war involving primarily States and Governments that are sensitive to friendly and other forms of pressure to restore peace in the region. This aspect distinguishes this situation from the situation in Sierra Leone.

My delegation thus shares the belief of the members of the Council's mission that the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has its own special characteristics, that the peacekeeping operation must be judged on its own merits and that the situation in Sierra Leone should in no way obscure the responsibility of the leaders of the region and the international community in respect of the Democratic

Republic of the Congo, nor their capacity to make a real difference in my country.

The United Nations should therefore take advantage of this respite to proceed to the rapid deployment of phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). Mr. Laurent-Desiré Kabila, President of the Republic, assured the members of the Council's mission that the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo would not create any obstacle to such deployment. The head of State also reiterated the readiness of the Government to cooperate fully with MONUC.

My delegation would like to take this opportunity to express its heartfelt thanks to all of those countries that have made a substantive contribution to MONUC and would like to say to them that their sons and daughters, who are committed to the cause of peace for my country, are welcome in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Congolese Government and people are ready to receive them in the best tradition of African hospitality.

Aside from stopping the fighting, the United Nations should also work at restoring the most fundamental rights of the Congolese population, as it is authorized to do by resolution 1291 (2000) of 24 February of this year, primarily in paragraphs 12 through 15.

The non-governmental organization Human Rights Watch, based in New York, has just published a damning report on the brutal acts committed on occupied Congolese territory by the aggressors, in violation of the principles of human rights and of international humanitarian law. My Government urgently demands that the United Nations insist that the Governments of Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda, the Goma and Bunia factions of the Congolese Rally for Democracy and the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo immediately halt all attacks aimed at civilian populations. The United Nations must carry out investigations to establish the facts and begin legal proceedings against the perpetrators of these crimes.

As a result of armed aggression, my country has become the land of choice for illicit activities of all types. The United Nations has already shown itself to be seriously concerned by the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the forces of aggression. This practice fuels

their war effort, thus perpetuating the destitution of the Congolese people. This is why my Government supports the proposal made to the Security Council by the Secretary-General to establish a group of experts, in accordance with paragraph 17 of resolution 1291 (2000), and asks that the Security Council follow up the Secretary-General's proposal.

My Government calls upon the Security Council to make this expert group effectively operational as quickly as possible in order to put an end to such activities, which are obviously accompanied by the destruction, the dismantling and the illegal transfer to the aggressor countries of economic, environmental and industrial infrastructure from the occupied provinces.

The inter-Congolese dialogue is one of the provisions of the Lusaka Agreement. The President of the Republic has rightly emphasized that the major objective of that dialogue continues to be the participation of the Congolese people at those meetings, thus allowing it to express itself freely on its future and also to choose or to determine the bodies that will govern the future of the Republic.

From their talks, both with the Government and with representatives of civil society, religious groups and political parties, the members of the Council's mission doubtless will have understood that an unequivocal consensus is emerging in favour of holding these meetings as soon as possible.

Since the outset of the aggression of which it has been a victim, my country has continued to reaffirm that the restoration of peace will allow for the establishment of a favourable climate for the implementation of the programme of national reconstruction and development that the people of the Congo so keenly desire. The aggression has put in jeopardy for a long time to come the development and well-being of the present and future generations of all countries of the Great Lakes region. All of our countries are now faced with the task of consolidating peace domestically and of economic reconstruction. Renewing good-neighbourly relations is a prerequisite of vital and primary importance. If all the countries of the region, assisted by the United Nations and the international community, grasp the complexities that have been at the foundation of the aggression and demonstrate their readiness to make sincere efforts, the

problems that we are facing should ultimately be settled.

We must have the courage to identify dispassionately the specific problems facing our countries and to take, within the framework of a global approach, reliable measures aimed at national reconciliation, power-sharing, the establishment of republican armies, the establishment or revitalization of the process of democratization, and development.

It is in this spirit that the Democratic Republic of the Congo supports the holding of an international conference on peace, stability, security and development in the Great Lakes region. Each country must bear full responsibility for its people, deal with its own contradictions and refrain from placing on others the burden of its own inability to manage its contradictions. The international community has a moral obligation to assist us in developing our capabilities to resolve our problems.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that from the United Nations and the Security Council, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is expecting, first, the deployment, as soon as possible, of phase II of MONUC, in order to establish conditions conducive to the withdrawal of the occupying forces; secondly, the establishment of an expert group to study the question of the illegal exploitation of the natural and other resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; thirdly, the early holding of the inter-Congolese dialogue; and fourthly, the effective implementation of the Lusaka Agreement.

My Government wishes to assure the Council of its full and total cooperation, so that the process begun in Lusaka can be successfully concluded.

The meeting was suspended at 1.15 p.m.